

**Board of Health Meeting Minutes  
February 20, 2018**

**Board Members & Liaisons Present:**

Constance Young, EdD, RN, Chairperson  
Holly Mulrenan, BSN, RN, MS, Vice Chairperson  
Atty. Christine M. Gonillo, Secretary  
Joan Cagginello, MS, RN  
Joan M. Costello, BSN, RN  
Ernest Judson  
Mitchell Quintner, DMD  
Ray Vitali, Board of Alderman Liaison  
Warren Pawlowski, Board of Education Liaison

*Board Members & Liaisons not present:*

Ellen Beatty, Board of Alderman Liaison

*Others Present:*

Pam McLoughlin, New Haven Register

*Health Department Staff Present:*

Deepa Joseph, MPH, Director of Health  
Carol Soulier, Recording Secretary

C. Young called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**Approval of Minutes – January 16, 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on January 16, 2018 were approved unanimously on a motion by E. Judson and seconded by J. Costello.

**Public Session:** *None*

**Environmental Division Report – Laura M. Miller, REHS/RS**

*CRIDE (Collaborative for Residential Integrity for the Disabled and Elderly):* During the monthly CRIDE meeting that was convened on February 5, 2018, members of the Environmental Health Division presented to the group two new reported hoarding and troubled housing cases in addition to status reports on several open ongoing cases. Since that meeting, MHD received and responded to three new complaints of hoarding/unsanitary living conditions from the Fire and Police Departments. We are currently working with thirteen open cases of troubled housing consisting of hoarding and unsanitary living conditions. These are very difficult housing problems requiring a comprehensive process of gaining trust, encouraging the resident's participation in the remediation process and long-term contact and monitoring. In several instances the unsanitary conditions of the dwelling necessitated condemnation, displacing the occupants until clean-out is achieved.

When a case of troubled housing is reported to the Health Department, the Chief of the Environmental Health Division typically triages the call and deploys an Environmental Health Sanitarian and the Milford Health Department Case Manager to the site. The complaints comprise a wide variety of issues such as physical disability/reasonable accommodation concerns, fire and life safety hazards, housing issues and lack of financial resources, medical/mental health issues compromising quality of life, hoarding, bed bugs, and moving/storage concerns. The MHD finds out about these properties either by a complaint of blight or a call requesting assistance from the Police or Fire Departments.

*Anti-blight activities:* As of the week ending February 16, 2018 the Health Department received 240 general complaints from Milford residents. Of those 240 complaints, 59 were complaints of blight for the 2017/2018 fiscal year thus far. Over time each complaint is in various stages of the process, some properties do not meet the criteria set up in the anti-blight ordinance and are being investigated under the Housing or General Public Health codes. Properties that fail to comply with the orders defined in the issued Notice of Violation are referred to the City Attorney's office for enforcement action. The owners of these properties may be fined \$100 for each day the violation(s) continue to exist after the compliance date specified in the notice of violation. Currently there are sixteen blighted properties undergoing enforcement action.

*Comments:*

- *C. Young asked if residents involved in troubled housing cases were older people. D. Joseph responded that recent cases involve individuals who are age fifty and up.*
- *Discussion ensued regarding hoarding and troubled housing cases. D. Joseph reported that the sanitarians work collaboratively with the Health Department's part-time Case Manager, Lesley Darling, to bring properties into compliance while gathering social service resources to assist individuals and families through the process. C. Gonillo asked if the area Agency on Aging is involved in C-RIDE, and D. Joseph confirmed that it is.*
- *J. Cagginello asked if the Department has considered expanding the Case Manager position to full-time in light of the number of cases, as well as to serve as a more comprehensive liaison to provide services at both the Health Department and Department of Human Services. D. Joseph responded that the idea has been considered and that a full-time position would help meet the demands we are seeing in both departments with the part-time Case Manager at the Health Department and both Outreach Worker positions at Human Services working beyond full capacity.*

**Nursing Division Report – Joan Campbell, RN, BSN**

*Seasonal Flu and Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Campaign*

For the week ending 2/10/18, the Connecticut Department of Public Health reports that influenza activity continues to be high and widespread throughout the state “with a continuing high percentage of patients presenting to hospital emergency departments, an increasing percentage of patients presenting to outpatient providers with ILI (influenza-like-illness), and increasing numbers of flu-associated hospitalizations and deaths.” In CT and throughout the United States, influenza A (H3N2) viruses are predominating, although influenza A (H1N1) and influenza B are also seen. As of 2/10/18, a total of 4,915 positive influenza cases have been reported

statewide for the current season with 1,351 being in New Haven County. Of the 4,915 influenza reports, 2,971 were Type A (subtype unspecified), 759 were Type A (H3N2), 78 were Type A (H1N1), and 1,104 were influenza B viruses, and 3 of unknown type. A total of 1,638 hospitalized patients with laboratory-confirmed influenza have been reported statewide since August 27<sup>th</sup>. There have been 77 influenza-associated deaths state wide (61 associated with flu A and 16 with flu B). 62 of the deaths involved individuals greater than 65 years of age, 9 were 50-64 years of age, 4 were 25-49 years of age, 1 was between 19-24 years of age, and 1 was between 5-18 years of age. According to CT DPH, the death toll of 77 is above the range of influenza-associated deaths reported during the previous five seasons and more deaths are anticipated.

As the increase in flu cases in the state were being recognized, along with the accompanying severity of symptoms, the MHD organized an extra flu clinic for the public on January 24<sup>th</sup> with a good response. Another flu clinic was offered to the public on February 7<sup>th</sup> where turnout was low – possibly due to the snow/rain precipitation.

Subsequently, Health Departments across the state were strongly encouraged by Health Commissioner Raul Pino to hold Saturday flu clinics for the public. CT DPH is providing funding which enables local health departments to offer the vaccine free of charge to everyone at these Saturday clinics.

The Milford Health Department hosted a Saturday flu clinic on February 10, 2017. Turnout was very good and 165 adults and 47 children were vaccinated. Many positive comments on this clinic were received from those attending.

In addition, the CT *Vaccine for Children* program modified their coverage requirements to ensure all children age 6 months through 18 years of age can receive the flu vaccine free of charge.

The Milford Health Department continues its seasonal influenza campaign with the monthly immunization clinics held at the Health Department. We will continue to provide the influenza vaccine through March 2018. Both the regular flu vaccine and the high dose vaccine for individuals over sixty-five years of age will be offered. The school nurses and Health Department continue to monitor the Influenza Like Illness (ILI) activity in the schools. This past month, some schools noticed some days of increased absenteeism but no appreciative ILI activity in the health offices. The school nurses continue to provide influenza prevention and hand washing education in all of the schools.

#### School Health Services

Kindergarten Registration is in the process of being scheduled by the Milford Public Schools. It will be held in March at each of the eight elementary schools. Each school will have two to three registration days. The school nurses will meet with the parents of all of the students registering for kindergarten to review medical information, discuss health concerns and obtain necessary health releases to speak to primary care providers regarding the health needs of the children during the school day.

*Comments:*

- *R. Vitali asked if school nurses are finding that many families are opposed to the flu shot. D. Joseph responded that she is not aware of any increased opposition to the vaccine. At the additional MHD flu clinic held on January 24<sup>th</sup>, many of the individuals vaccinated were Milford children.*
- *D. Joseph reported that representatives from the CT Department of Public Health Office of Public Health Preparedness & Response visited the flu clinic held on Saturday, February 10<sup>th</sup>, as that office will be reimbursing our department for the cost of the vaccine. The clinic was very successful, largely due to increased awareness regarding flu activity, as well as widespread publicity via an Everbridge message from the Mayor and use of the sign trailer.*
- *J. Cagginello asked if MHD provides flu test kits to those pediatric providers who may have run out. D. Joseph responded that the MHD does not carry these kits.*

**Emergency Preparedness Report - Tara Mustakos Wassmer, REHS/RS, CHES**

Milford Health Department (MHD) hosted an influenza (flu) vaccination clinic February 10<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to 1 PM. Overall 212 vaccinations were provided, of these 47 individuals were less than 19 years of age. The clinic was part of a larger effort by the CT Department of Public Health (CT DPH) to get as many Connecticut residents vaccinated as possible. Vaccine was offered free of charge for children and adults receiving the regular dose vaccine. Volunteers from the Milford Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) assisted with administering vaccination and traffic control. MHD has offered flu vaccine since the beginning of flu season but the increase in positive flu cases has raised awareness for residents to get vaccinated.

One of the Region 2 redundant communication drills was completed earlier this month. New Haven Health Department hosted the first drill; the second Health Department/District is still to be determined. A plan to conduct these drills is coordinated by the CT DPH Drill & Exercise Coordinator as required by contract.

Emergency Support Function (ESF) 8, Health & Medical monthly meeting is scheduled for February 21<sup>st</sup> in Meriden. The main topic for discussion will be review of the Hazard Vulnerability Assessments submitted by local health and the acute care hospitals in Region 2 back in November.

MHD Volunteer Coordinator submitted annual reports for both Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) activities for the year. The Annual Report for CERT is mandatory whereas the MRC report is not. The National MRC website is a great resource for local units to report out, track events and promote volunteer participation.

On January 25<sup>th</sup> the MHD Volunteer Coordinator met with UNH Emergency Management Club to discuss development of the neighborhood ambassador program training. Students have the opportunity to earn Emergency Management credits for working on the program in the form of an Independent Study/Research Project/Internship requirement. A training schedule will be developed based on the development of the Neighborhood Ambassador Program. If possible, it

would make sense to have trainings on each individual topic before the final draft of each chapter is completed.

Milford's annual review, the Medical Counter Measure, Operational Readiness Review (MCM ORR) is fast approaching. The review evaluates emergency plans for consistency as outlined by the National Standards for Public Health Preparedness 15 Capabilities:

- Community Preparedness
- Community Recovery
- Emergency Operations Coordination
- Emergency Public Information & Warning
- Fatality Management
- Information Sharing
- Mass Care
- Medical Countermeasure Dispensing
- Medical Materiel Management & Distribution
- Medical Surge
- Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions
- Public Health Laboratory Testing
- Public Health Surveillance & Epidemiological Investigation
- Responder Safety & Health
- Volunteer Management

*Comments: None.*

#### **Community Health – Jennifer Clarke-Lofters, MPA**

##### Communicable Disease Surveillance

There were 241 cases of disease reported for the month of January, with Influenza being the most frequently reported. The total number of influenza reported thus far is 230.

##### Putting on AIRS Asthma Program

The program offers up to three (3) home visits and a 6 month follow up after a participant has been enrolled. We have received a total of 84 referrals. This month we received 9 referrals. For the year we have completed 30 initial home visits, 22 second, and 17 third home visits. We have completed three (3) 6 month follow up calls.

##### Community Events

The Department has partnered with Milford Prevention Council (MPC) and CT Association of Prevention Professionals (CAPP) to host a presentation called Hidden in Plain Sight (HIPS). The presentation is for adults only and is created to bring awareness around current drug trends in youth. The presentation itself consists of a mock teen bedroom demonstration where participants are invited to browse the room for 30 minutes in search of drugs and/or other paraphernalia followed by a 60 minute presentation on the products, warning signs, and how to bring up these important issues and concerns with youth. We are also in the works of planning a series of community walk and talks in Milford and partnering with Milford Hospital and Woodruff Family YMCA. This would assist us in fulfilling one of the needs in our Healthy Lifestyles priority area for the Milford Community.

### Public Health Accreditation

We have continued our collaboration efforts with the Partnership of Greater New Haven to complete action steps created in our Community Health Assessment (CHA) and Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Our priorities areas to address in our CHIP include: access to care, healthy lifestyles, and mental health and substance abuse. The next step in moving forward in this process is creating a Strategic Plan. We now have a consultant to assist us with our strategic plan, and she will be starting in March. We will start by having a strategic planning overview session in-house to review strategic planning and its processes. We have created and are reviewing an RFP to enlist the help of an accreditation consultant/specialist. We look forward to taking the necessary action steps in order to submit our application to PHAB (Public Health Advisory Board) to apply for accreditation in the near future.

### Grants Management

The Department makes an effort to obtain funding through other sources such as grants. Grant management continues to be a huge part of the Community Health Division with many programmatic and financial reports due. During this time, we are working on completely closing out grants from 2016-2017 fiscal year with the distribution of refund checks that need to be issued out by request of the funder.

### Comments:

- *D. Joseph pointed out that the Department has received reports for 241 laboratory-confirmed cases of communicable disease, with the majority being influenza cases. In looking at the graph presented on the handout, the number is a significant increase in comparison to January 2017 when we received 78 reports.*
- *Discussion ensued regarding the flyer for the Hidden in Plain Sight drug awareness presentation. C. Gonillo asked if this event has been publicized. D. Joseph responded that it has been publicized and that the flyer will be posted on the MHD website.*

**Old Business: None.**

### **Director's Report: Deepa Joseph, MPH**

- *D. Joseph introduced the new Administrative Assistant, Carol Soulier.*
- *D. Joseph reported that the posting for the Sanitarian position closed Friday, February 16<sup>th</sup>. M. Quintner asked if the salary is competitive. D. Joseph confirmed that it is in line with other towns and cities of similar size.*
- *D. Joseph reported the Board of Finance meeting for the Health Department's budget will be held on Wednesday, February 21<sup>st</sup>. Discussion ensued regarding the informational handouts prepared by Health Department staff for the BOF meeting.*

**New Business: None.**

### **Adjournment:**

*J. Costello motioned to adjourn the meeting seconded by E. Judson and was unanimously approved.*

The meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Soulier". The signature is fluid and elegant, with the first name "Carol" and last name "Soulier" clearly distinguishable.

Carol Soulier  
Recorder